

E-Bulletin Newsletter



To provide affordable financial assistance to communities within Wisconsin for water infrastructure projects that protect and improve public health and water quality for current and future generations.



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Submit Now: Application to Increase Water Rates

Submit your application to increase water rates to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) as soon as possible for your State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020 Safe Drinking Water Loan Program (SDWLP) projects.

One of the requirements for closing a SDWLP loan is that the municipal utility has water rates in place that are adequate to repay the loan and continue proper operation of its water system. In order to incorporate costs associated with a major construction project into rates, a utility potentially needs to file a Conventional Rate Case (CRC). Direct questions about the rate increase process to PSC at 608-266-3766 or PSCWaterAppMail@wisconsin.gov.

Timeline

The PSC's goal is to process a rate case application within 180-210 days after receipt by the PSC. **September 15, 2019** is the DNR's last recommended date to submit rate case applications to PSC for SFY 2020 SDWLP projects.*

June 30, 2020 is the statutory loan closing deadline for SFY 2020 SDWLP projects. Required rate increases *must be in effect before* the project's Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) can be executed, per s. NR 166.11(7) Wis. Adm. Code. A municipality can lose its SDWLP funding allocation if the water rate increase is not approved by PSC early enough to close by the June 30th deadline. [Learn more](#) about coordinating the SDWLP requirements with the PSC rate case process.

PSC resources

- [Rate Case Application Form to Increase Water Rates](#)
- [Overview of the Rate Case Process](#)
- [FAQs: Conventional Rate Case Process](#)

*The timeline and recommended submittal date were corrected on 8/28/19 per [Kathy Butzlaff](#), PSC.

DOA Email Tip

A good way to contact staff at the Department of Administration (DOA) Capital Finance Office is to email their shared account, DOAEIF@wisconsin.gov. Emails sent to this address get answered by the first available person. This can save valuable project time!

Upcoming Deadlines

September

SFY 20 SDWLP Draft Funding List.

September 15

*Last recommended date to submit rate case to PSC for SFY 20 SDWLP projects.

September 30

SFY 20 CWFP PF application deadline.
*Non-PF apps. accepted year-round.

October

SFY 20 SDWLP Final Funding List.

October 30

SFY 20 CWFP PF project priority score reevaluation request deadline.

October 31

SFY 21 Intent to Apply/PERF deadline.

[View Statutory Deadlines](#)

DNR, Environmental Loans Section—CF/2, 101 S. Webster Street, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921
dnr.wi.gov/aid/eif.html | CWFP phone: 608-267-7475 | SDWLP phone: 608-266-0849 | [staff directory webpage](#)



Program implementation details are outlined in chs. [NR 162](#) and [NR 166](#), Wis. Adm. Code. [Legal notice](#): This document is intended solely as guidance and does not contain any mandatory requirements except where requirements found in statute or administrative rule are referenced. Any regulatory decisions made by the Department of Natural Resources in any matter addressed by this guidance will be made by applying the governing statutes and administrative rules to the relevant facts. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. This publication is available in alternative format upon request, call 608-267-9481 for more information.

SFY 2020 CWFP PF Applications Due September 30th

As of July 1st, you can submit online Clean Water Fund Program (CWFP) applications requesting SFY 2020 financial assistance. You may wish to review the guidance document, [CWFP Application Process & Contents](#).

For assistance accessing the online system, entering information, and submitting an application, review the [CWFP Online Application Help Text](#). All SFY 2020 CWFP applications must be submitted via the [online system](#).

- CWFP applications are accepted year-round for projects not seeking principal forgiveness (PF).
- Applications are due **September 30, 2019** to compete for SFY 2020 CWFP principal forgiveness.

Exception

Any applications to the [Small Loans Program \(SLP\)](#) must be submitted in hard copy using the Interest Rate Subsidy Application ([Form 8700-249](#)).

- Submit SFY 2020 SLP applications now.
- SLP projects are *not* eligible for principal forgiveness.

PERF score reevaluation requests

If you submit an eligible CWFP PF application for a project, you may request a PERF score reevaluation within 30 days of the application deadline.

Submit PERF score reevaluation requests with supporting documentation by October 30, 2019 to the CWFP coordinator at Lisa.Bushby@Wisconsin.gov. If you have questions, Lisa can also be contacted at 608-267-7475.

Plans and specifications reminder

Submit **required copies** of approvable, biddable plans and specifications to the DNR Bureau of Water Quality for approval by the September 30th application deadline.

- Follow requirements as explained in the DNR's [Plan Submittal Requirements for Sewerage Systems](#).

An **additional, electronic copy** of approvable, biddable construction plans and specifications must be submitted by the September 30th application deadline to the Bureau of Community Financial Assistance for all portions of the project for which funding is being requested.

New Website for Wage Determinations

[WDOL.gov](#) (Wage Determinations On-Line) is retired and replaced with [beta.SAM.gov](#) (Wage Determinations).

The links to WDOL.gov still work, however, users will be redirected to beta.SAM.gov, which now provides the required wage rates and fringe benefit rates that must be met on federal procurement contracts for each labor category covered by the Davis-Bacon Act (DBA) or Service Contract Act (SCA) as determined by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

Checking prevailing wage rates

Everything you used to do in WDOL.gov, can now be done in beta.SAM.gov. Significant improvements to functionality were made during the transition, such as:

- Adding a search-based structure.
- Offering the ability to search data by number, keyword, or location for exact, immediate results.
- Providing easy-to-use search filters to quickly find the right wage determination.
- Introducing the ability to search both active and inactive (archived) data at the same time.
- Providing a timeline and history of changes made to wage determinations.

- Creating a robust learning center with FAQ's, video tutorials, and glossary information.
- Adding capabilities such as saving searches, accessing workspace, and following wage determinations for those who create a beta.SAM.gov account.

Setting up a user account

A beta.SAM.gov user account is required in order to access additional functionality beyond the basic public search. Beta.SAM.gov is now utilizing [login.gov](#) for its sign-up and sign-in features.

- Watch how to create a user account at <https://beta.sam.gov/cm/videos/detail?id=231>.

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is merging its current legacy sites into one system. This transition offers a more efficient way to access all federal award information, [learn more](#).

Note: [FBO.gov](#) (Federal Business Opportunities) & [FPDS.gov](#) (Federal Procurement Data System) remain the authoritative sources for contract information.

SFY 2021 Intent to Apply Due October 31st

October 31, 2019 is the deadline to submit online a notice of Intent to Apply (ITA) with Priority Evaluation and Ranking Formula (PERF) information if you're seeking financial assistance in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021.

This statutory deadline for [ITAs and PERFs](#) applies to all types of projects funded under the Clean Water Fund Program (CWFP) and the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program (SDWLP).

Online system & submittal process

We'll send an email notification once the online system is ready for SFY 2021 ITAs, anticipated to be the **first week in September**. Help text will be in place in the system to guide you.

Visit the [online system](#) webpage to:

- access and learn about the online system and submittal process;
- learn how to request a WAMS ID and Switchboard access;
- learn about and download the Online Submittal Authorization Certificate;
- learn how to upload documents, selecting the appropriate category and type; and
- view additional online guidance documents.

Upload documents for PERF points

Appropriate supporting documentation will be required in order to receive PERF points (for both loan programs). If documentation is not uploaded, **zero** points will be given for that question.

Online Submittal Authorization in Effect Until Revoked

For the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021 funding cycle, submitting the updated [Online Submittal Authorization Certificate](#) is mandatory for any municipality choosing to allow a consultant access to its project(s), to enter, or to enter and submit required materials through the online system on its behalf.

Beginning with SFY 2021, the consultant's authorization will stay in effect until the municipality revokes it.

An authorized municipal representative (*e.g., administrator, clerk, director of public works, mayor, president, or other position delegated such authority*) must complete, sign, and send the certificate to the DNR.

- Email the signed, completed form as a PDF to Rebecca.Mesdjian@wisconsin.gov.

The completed certificate must be received by the DNR before the designated consultant will be granted access to submit materials on behalf of the municipality. Failure to submit a complete, signed certificate to the DNR shall result in denial of authorization meant for the consultant.

New Firm, New Form

The updated certificate does not need to be submitted annually to the DNR, unless the municipal applicant changes consultants. If a municipal applicant changes consulting firms between the ITA and Application, the municipality must cancel the authorization of its current firm and submit a new Online Submittal Authorization Certificate form for its new firm to the DNR.

How to Revoke Authorization

A municipality can revoke its designated consultant's authorization at any time, for any reason. The municipality's authorized representative can email the cancellation request to Rebecca.Mesdjian@wisconsin.gov. Please include detailed contact information for the consultant and municipality (likened to the authorization certificate). The cancellation process may change as we continue to improve the online system.

Authorized Municipal Officials

The Online Submittal Authorization Certificate is **not** required if an authorized municipal official submits the materials through the online system. The DNR encourages municipal applicants to have its representatives obtain WAMS IDs and DNR Switchboard access early in the funding process to allow enough time for entering and submitting materials prior to program deadlines.

October 25, 2019 is the final submittal date for Web Access Management System (WAMS) user ID requests, DNR Switchboard access requests, and SFY 2021 Online Submittal Authorization Certificates. To learn how to request a WAMS ID and Switchboard access, visit the [online system](#) webpage.

Contact information

Direct questions about using the online system to:
Rebecca Mesdjian, Database manager
608-266-5888
Rebecca.Mesdjian@wisconsin.gov

Federal Equivalency Projects and the SDWLP

Is your municipality's population $\geq 10,000$?

Are your total SDWLP project costs $\geq \$1,000,000$?

Starting with SFY 2020, all Safe Drinking Water Loan Program (SDWLP) projects in municipalities with a population of 10,000 or greater **and** total project costs of \$1M or greater, will automatically be designated as federal equivalency. See more in "[Federal Equivalency Projects](#)" on page 5 of E-Bulletin Volume 8, Issue 2.

SFY 2020 SDWLP Draft Funding List

We anticipate publishing the SFY 2020 SDWLP Draft Funding List in early September. An email notification will be sent out when it is available and posted to the [Project Lists and IUPs](#) webpage.

The SFY 2020 SDWLP Draft Funding List will include complete applications submitted by the June 30, 2019 deadline and show the estimated allocation of loan and principal forgiveness (PF) dollars and total requested costs for each project. The projects will be listed in priority score order.

Priority and principal forgiveness

The priority score ordering is used for the allocation of [principal forgiveness](#) funds that reduce the size of a project's loan. PF is additional subsidy, provided by the federal government, to finance the highest-priority projects in municipalities with the greatest financial need.

Final Funding List

The SFY 2020 SDWLP Funding List will be finalized when we receive the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 Capitalization Grant from EPA (anticipated by end of September).

Executive Order on Buy-American *Does Not Apply* to the Environmental Loans Programs

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined the EPA **does not** have infrastructure programs that would be considered covered by Executive Order 13858, under the definition of "covered programs" and **does not** plan to implement changes to its communications with assistance agreements applicants or recipients as a result.

Executive Order on Strengthening Buy-American Preferences for Infrastructure Projects

Section 3(a) of E.O. 13858 requires agencies administering a covered program to encourage recipients of new Federal financial assistance awards pursuant to a covered program to use, to the greatest extent practica-

ble, iron and aluminum as well as steel, cement, and other manufactured products produced in the United States in every contract, subcontract, purchase order, or sub-award that is chargeable against such Federal financial assistance award.

Definitions

Section 2(e) defines "covered programs" and provides exceptions from that definition, including programs that provide Federal financial assistance that are subject to comparable domestic preferences, as stated in section 2(e)(ii). EPA's assistance agreements for "infrastructure projects" as defined in section 2(d) of the E.O. are subject to comparable domestic preferences.

WRRDA and WIIN Act on the Use of American Iron and Steel (AIS) *Do Apply* to the Environmental Loans Programs

Congress first included a provision for the use of American Iron and Steel (AIS) for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) in the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

The use of American Iron and Steel requirement remains in effect for ALL Clean Water Fund Program (CWFP) projects and Safe Drinking Water Loan Program (SDWLP) projects.

On June 10, 2014, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) made the UAIS requirement permanent for the CWSRF. On December 16, 2016, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act was passed and included language on AIS for the DWSRF.

Resources

EPA [SRF American Iron & Steel Requirement](#)
DNR [Use of American & and Steel](#)

Staff Update and New Loan Project Managers

Meja Maka

Meja Maka was selected to fill a project manager position with specialty areas covering multi-funding source projects, innovative small system technologies, and unsewered project funding. He officially started his new position on June 24th. Meja continues to work out of the DNR's Central Office in Madison, his phone number (608-266-9193) and email (Meja.Maka@wisconsin.gov) remain the same.

Meja's interests and experience with DNR over the past 32 years make him an exceptionally good fit for this position. He has been the project manager for many complex projects with multiple funding sources. Meja served

as the program coordinator for Federal Advances of Allowance that worked with municipalities to finance the adoption of innovative technologies.

He is transferring his duties as the DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) specialist to another project manager. Meja is excited and invigorated to begin his new specialty areas.



Jessica Wagner

Jessica Wagner was selected to fill a second project manager vacancy and is initially focusing on the DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) specialty area. Jessica started her new position on July 8th. She continues to work out of the Bureau of Community Financial Assistance (CFA) space in the Central Office. She can be contacted at 608-266-3915 and

JessicaL.Wagner@wisconsin.gov.

Jessica came from the DNR Grants section where she was the Nonpoint Source Program grant manager. She brings a wealth of financial knowledge, project manage-

ment experience, and energy to the program. Below is the background she provided:

I am excited to continue my career at the DNR in the Loans program (CFA). My husband, Adam, and our three daughters, Ava 12, Alissa 11, and Amelia 3 reside near the Rock River, which allows us to enjoy nature, boating and fishing. I obtained my Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication with a minor in Economics from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. From there, I earned my Master of Business Administration in Executive Management from Indiana Wesleyan University. My career has taken me to large corporations, small businesses and everything in between working in HR, accounting, and operations leadership. I look forward to learning more in my new role and the ability to work with the Loans Team!

Casey Sweeney

Casey Sweeney will serve as a project manager with specialty areas covering environmental justice, strategic planning, and process improvement. Casey started his new position on July 22nd, and he is working out of the DNR's Central Office. He can be contacted at Casey.Sweeney@wisconsin.gov and 608-267-0490.

Casey came from the Department of Administration (DOA) where he was a grants specialist at Serve Wisconsin. For the past five years, Casey primarily managed the grant competitions for federal AmeriCorps funds in Wisconsin. He provided the following background:

Originally hailing from Green Lake, Wisconsin, I was first introduced to the field of water and sanitation while serving with the year-long, international volunteer program called Young Adults in Global Mission. South of Mexico City, I worked with a nonprofit organization that targets schools in water scarce regions.

I hold a Bachelor of Arts in conservation biology, environmental studies, and Spanish. In my free time, I enjoy backpacking, cooking, reading, and listening to music.



Please join us in congratulating Meja, Jessica, and Casey on their new positions with the Environmental Loans Section!